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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 23 of the Second Extraordinary Session  
By Brooks

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the pastor and congregation of the Greater Imani Church & Christian Center on the celebration of the church's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the good people at the Greater Imani Church & Christian Center in Memphis, comprise one such congregation, who are celebrating their tenth anniversary this year; and

WHEREAS, the congregation's founder and pastor, Dr. Bill Adkins, in a revelation from God, organized the church for "...the express purpose of serving the Lord and His people in a holistic manner and with truth..."; and

WHEREAS, the word "Imani" means "faith" in Swahili, thus the name of the church, Greater Imani, serves "...as a self-explanatory invitation to all of God's people of the Diaspora to come and hear the truth..."; and

WHEREAS, the first official meeting of the Greater Imani Church was held on November 7, 1989 in the home of Dr. and Mrs. Adkins. On this historic night, Dr. Adkins ordained the Rev. Maurice A. Johnson, Sr., as Deacon, who later became an Associate Minister of the church; and

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WHEREAS, also appointed on that fateful night as leaders of the church were Bro. Philip Dotson, Ronné Allen Adkins, Christopher George Adkins, Sis. Brenda Johnson, Maurice A. Johnson, Jr., Marcus A. Johnson, Philip T. R. Dotson, Tiffany Dotson, Brian Dotson, Sis. Rean Jackson, and Sis. Margaret Anderson. As a result of this consequential meeting, Greater Imani was formed with a membership of 29 dedicated and faithful members; and

WHEREAS, their first worship service was held on December 3, 1989 in the uncompleted church building, located at 3241 Woodrow Street in the Frayser community, where there was plenty of love and praise of God's Holy Name. Dr. Adkins referenced I Kings 8:9 in his sermon, "Solomon, Hallow These Halls." The Spirit of the Lord was truly present during this momentous occasion; and

WHEREAS, April 1, 1990 marked Greater Imani's First Special Celebration sponsored by the dedicated men and women of the 300-member church; the co-chairpersons of this celebration were Bro. Alvin Taylor and Sis. Kathy Watson; and

WHEREAS, November of 1990 marked Greater Imani's First Anniversary; the theme, "Seeking The Truth, 'And Ye Shall Know The Truth, And The Truth Shall Make You Free.'", taken from John 8:32. The co-chairpersons for this event were Sis. Morristein Holman, Sis. Janet Stuckey, and Sis. Sandra Evans; and

WHEREAS, the next fifteen months was a period of unimagined growth for a church so young. The rapid growth of Greater Imani was a great blessing from God, but along with such mighty blessings also came several problems, namely the church's size could not accommodate its ever-growing number of followers; and

WHEREAS, in early 1991, the Historic Clayborn-Ball Temple of the AME Church, located at 294 Hernando Street, in Downtown Memphis, was purchased as the new home of the Greater Imani Church; and

WHEREAS, personally funded by Dr. Adkins, the Church's Christian and Child Development Center, named after Dr. Carter G. Woodson, was built with the vision of being a

multicultural Christian school for children where prayer would not be prohibited, but instead would be insisted upon as an integral component of the curriculum. The school also introduced foreign languages to its students with the goal of reassuring each child that he or she is brilliant and beautiful, and made in the image of Jesus; and

WHEREAS, opening on April 7, 1992, the Carter G. Woodson Child Development Center became another vision realized by Pastor Adkins, and is recognized today as one of the best child care centers in the state; and

WHEREAS, it has been said that, "Dr. Adkins remains steadfast and consistent as a trumpet blower for the Lord, standing on the point in the service to God. Greater Imani has grown to over 6,000 members during these ten years"; and

WHEREAS, as the congregation embarks on their second decade of humble Christian service, Greater Imani continues to grow, bringing more people into the fold of God; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the congregation of the Greater Imani Church & Christian Center, led by the Dr. Bill Adkins, for its ten years of dedicated service to God, their community, and the state of Tennessee and extend to them our congratulations and best wishes as they celebrate their tenth anniversary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.